

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

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SUBJECT: (Optional)				
Monthly Report -- Tel Aviv Bureau				
FROM:		EXTENSION	NO	
Chief, Operations Group		3-5991	DATE	
			May 1988	
TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
	RECEIVED	FORWARDED		
1. C/MOD				
2.				
3. C/ESG				
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5. C/FED				
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7. C/ADD				
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9. C/HED				
10.				
11. C/Computer Operations				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15. Retain/Destroy				

FBIS-6028-88
2 June 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH: Acting Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Tel Aviv Bureau -- May 1988

I. GENERAL

A. On the night of 2 May, the IDF, using mixed elements in roughly regimental strength and receiving support from SLA units, entered Lebanon in a preemptive strike against targets thought to be staging areas for terrorist penetrations of Israel's northern border. The operation, which lasted less than 48 hours and was the largest military move into Lebanon since the early 1985 withdrawal from that country, extended beyond Israel's self-declared "security zone" and was highlighted by the destruction of Maydun following heavy house-to-house fighting between IDF paratroopers and Hizballah fighters. The village had been deserted some time ago by its civilian inhabitants and, according to Jerusalem radio, had been converted into a Hizballah "fortified barracks." Defense Minister Rabin was criticized from many quarters for not consulting the Cabinet prior to the operation, during which three IDF soldiers were killed; but Prime Minister Shamir, as well as most of the Cabinet itself, supported Rabin's decision.

B. Two interesting developments were seen during May in Israel's relations with the East Bloc countries. On the 8th, Foreign Minister Peres paid a surprise visit to Budapest where he met with Hungarian officials, prompting media speculation that diplomatic ties might be restored in the next few months. Following the Hungarian sojourn, Peres went on to Madrid for the Socialist Internationale and then to Washington. During his visits in these two Western capitals, Peres met with Soviet officials, whose statements to him suggest a possible shift in the Soviet position on an international conference on Middle East peace. Israeli media has speculated widely that the Soviet decision not to insist on binding arbitration powers for an international conference and Moscow media's urging of the PLO to accept UN Resolutions 238 and 242 signal a trend toward moderation in Soviet Middle East policy. Prime Minister Shamir, however, is not so optimistic.

C. Even the weather made news this month -- American staffers got an unusual taste of desert climate when one of the worst sharavs (desert wind) in recent memory raised temperatures to 110 degrees Fahrenheit on the 18th in Tel Aviv and even higher in other parts of the country. We currently are again enjoying a long, extended Israeli spring, with moderate temperatures and unusually low humidity.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. The bureau received headquarters approval to purchase a TVRO, and by the end of the month administrative steps were under way to determine the dish's exact mounting location on the roof [redacted]. Once operational the TVRO will be used for coverage of Turkish television and possibly for limited backstopping of Nicosia's Tehran television coverage

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2. Bureau editors completed a spring reception survey of Cairo television. The bureau hopes to provide limited backstop coverage of two programs currently monitored in Nicosia. Although the backstop plan is not yet finalized, coordination on it has begun, and at least partial implementation is expected by the end of June.

B. Technical

1. The ERB approved the bureau's request to test a new computer hardware configuration at the slot position. Rather than using two full work stations, the slot editor will work with a single keyboard, a single CPU running Double DOS, and two video monitors, making both sides of Double DOS visible at all times. Although the primary reason for the experiment is to save space at the slot position, the bureau expects that editorial flexibility will be increased. The Victor VPCII computers do not support such a configuration, so an IBM PC/XT will be used as a test bed. If the new configuration proves operationally useful, the bureau will continue its use and will ask for further ERB/LEC investigation of its practical application with the Victors.

2. Five IBM Selectric III typewriters were transferred to Jordan Bureau.

III. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel

1. Persian/Dari/Arabic monitor [redacted] underwent two separate laser procedures to repair a damaged retina. After three weeks of sick leave, during which Nicosia and London provided coverage assistance, [redacted] has now returned to work feeling fit.

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2. [redacted] a new communications operator, entered on duty on the 8th, bringing the commo section back up to full strength.

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IV. VISITS

1. [redacted] deputy chief of Jordan Bureau, visited Tel Aviv 24-30 May for an orientation to and training on the FBA-1 system in preparation for her upcoming headquarters assignment.

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2. AG analyst [redacted] visited the bureau 16-18 May as part of his tour of Middle East bureaus and embassies.

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3. A headquarters TDY safety and health officer inspected the bureau premises on the 17th.

V. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Editorial Trainee [redacted] had the opportunity to learn more about embassy life when he attended the newcomers briefings, including the orientation trip to Jerusalem, with Junior Editor [redacted]

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[redacted]
Chief, FBIS Tel Aviv Bureau

cc: JN, NC

Attachments: Production Report